

**From:** Tom Gottshalk  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/20/01 5:13pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft settlement.

Dear Sirs,

Frankly, I have had problems all along with the DOJ's case against Microsoft because I think the main tenant of the suit that the public was harmed by Microsoft was never proved to any degree what so ever. Sure, even the most superficial review of the case one could make an argument that technically MS (Microsoft) violated some dusty corner of anti-trust law. And even show, as has been done, that MS is a monopoly. But given all that, I argue that it has done no harm to the public in fact just the opposite.

The very best thing that happened to the PC buying public was that the MS DOS operating system became the accepted standard. Shelf after shelf at retail stores filled with compatible software products. Computer games exploded and within a matter of a few years the internet became truly global. As a private citizen of the US I regularly browse libraries all over the world from my home. All this happened because there was a standard PC operating system that was compatible with all other so called IBM PCs anywhere in the world.

On the one hand, since 1981 when I purchased my first PC for about \$2900.00 not including software except IBM DOS 2.0. To the one I purchased last year for \$1500.00 including fabulous software compared to my first unit. I have benefited from 120 times in processor speed, 500 times the size of RAM, and 20,000 times the disk storage space of my hard drive. All for about half the cost of my original PC.

On the other hand, since the DOJ action against MS the negative impact on my IRA and my saving investments I would estimate has cost me somewhere between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in stock values and mutual fund values.

At this rate, I will take all the harm MS can dish out. Of course I am being factious. The fact remains, I do not think MS has harmed any consumer this one in particular but the DOJ has, and for what? To prove a legal technical point.

Remember, MS does not monopolize a natural resource. MS could close their doors tomorrow and sit on their copy right and there would never be another version of any of their software. Their engineers could refuse to THINK about improving Windows and Internet Explorer and the DOJ could do nothing to compel them to do otherwise. It is not a matter of getting someone else to drill cheaper or dig mines cheaper and share the product more broadly. All software is the product of thought not muscle and sweat. To what ever extent the DOJ punishes Microsoft it is to that extent that the DOJ will control, restrict, and frustrate the creative impulses of human thought that has benefited mankind thus far immeasurably. The DOJ is judging Microsoft with tools created in a completely different era and for a completely different kind of consumer product than we have before us. The DOJ is like a pre-Copernican, they can not see the true nature of the world because they fear a new vision a new truth because they believe they are right. Fine

Microsoft a dollar and be done with it.

Sincerely,

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